THE BLIND WHO SEE

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THE BLIND WHO SEE

THE Red Cross, among its many wise and kindly efforts to aid and comfort humanity, has been conducting researches in France, England and America with a view to determining occupations best fitted for our returned, blinded soldiers. After studying the work inaugurated by the Allies for the relief of the soldiers whose sight has been destroyed, the Red Cross started on its own initiative, an experimenting station. It has been proven that the blind make fine horticulturists, apiarists, stenographers, telephone switch-board operators, book-binders. They take kindly to basket, toy and rug making, weaving of all kinds, poultry raising and gardening. Massaging also offers a remunerative field, for when their fingers, already sensitive, become strong, and trained, they reach a high degree of perfection in this profession.

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The newest of employments for the blind has been opened through the efforts of Electrical Manufacturing companies. Dr. Schuyler S. Wheeler, after a study in France and England, felt that they could easily be taught to wind coils for armatures. This skilled work proved well within the ability of the sightless. They were given other work of electrical construction, such as weighing and stacking armature punchings, assembling and riveting pole shoes and sorting punchings of various types. The Western Electric Company declared that a certain blind man in their employ actually put out more work in a day than a man with his full sight. They find that the work is done efficiently and with more speed than might be expected. The Western Electric now employs many blind men in twisting wire used in electrical construction, finding their work eminently satisfactory.

St. Dunstan's Hostel for Blinded Soldiers and Sailors of London has been the model for many institutions for the education of the blind. Under the direction of Sir Arthur Pearson, more than eleven hundred blinded soldiers and sailors are being educated to be self-supporting. More than four hundred of these men are already earning more than before they lost their eyes. A blind man does not like to be regarded as an object of sympathy. All he asks for is a chance to work and to be given the education that makes him competent in his chosen line.

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LAST February, the French government, through Eugene Brieux, who is in charge of the war-blind of France, asked Dr. Wheeler to help establish electrical construction work among the blinded poilus. A number of sightless soldiers were put to work by the French

Miriam, who is a trained experienced teacher soon had the girls well organized and now Milada has been sent to help her and the two are doing well by the little groups. Five are reading, twenty girls are spelling in the Arabic primer, twenty-eight have learned the native cross-stitch and plain sewing. The others are working away with the Arabic alphabet on pieces of card board or blocks of wood, or learning to count with bright colored beads.

With the boys, I could not have managed, if Mr. Kelsey and his interpreter had not come to the rescue. They chose two Christian men and two Moslem Sheiks from the camp and organized the boys. We asked that the boys buy their own primers (ten cents each) and arranged for those who did not have the two piastres to work on Friday for their book. Almost a hundred books were sold. The boys have advanced faster in their books than the girls, as they take no school-time for hand-work and now that they have a trained teacher in Ibrahim Harb to help them, we expect them to make more progress in the next few weeks than ever before.

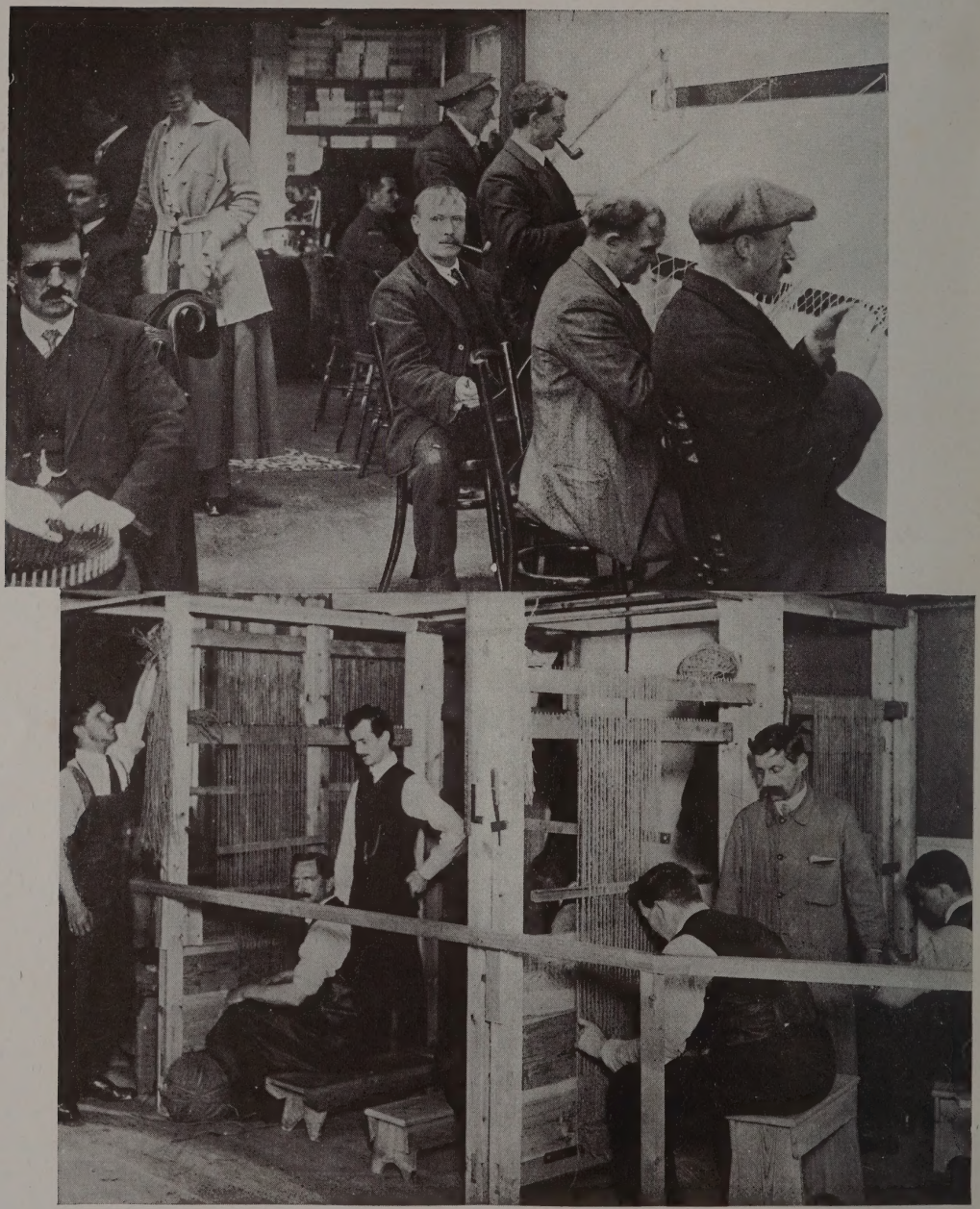
The last half hour every morning is given to physical culture and it is surprising how the little "wild Arabs" have learned to make the movements together.

Before leaving the history of the school at Wady Surar I want to tell just one more story. One evening while we were making the survey we saw two little girls aged about ten and eleven in a pulling-hair-fight. After we separated them I took the older one, Miriam by name (she is the daughter of one of the Sheiks that teaches for us) and I talked to her about the school that was to be, of the different things she would learn there, and how she would not have time to fight and I did not think she would want to fight. She became a devoted pupil, and one morning before breakfast, not so long ago, I was in Miss Metheney's hut issuing clothes when Miriam came to me with a troubled face. She came close to me and told me her little cousin, a boy about ten, was dying in the hospital. I had no interpreter with me but I put my arms around her and loved her for a few minutes and she wiped her tears and ran away. When I saw Miriam, the teacher, I asked her if she had seen the other Miriam, she said "Yes, the cousin is dead and Miriam came to me. I talked to her a little while about Heaven and then I told her she need not come to school today, she could stay with the women of her family but not to tear her hair and not to cry more than she could help." And she said "O my teacher, I will do anything you say, only we wish he might have lived until his father came from America and could see that my father did all he could for him." A speech that did not sound like the little girl who was pulling hair two months ago.

Courtesy of Ernst F. Smerdon

HEALTH AND HAPPINESS ARE REAPED AS THE WAR-BLINDED MEN OF ENGLAND TILL THE SOIL MAKING BARREN TRACTS TO YIELD FOOD FOR THE NATION.

SIGHTLESS MEN MAKE EXCELLENT CHICKEN FANCIERS REACHING UNCANNY SKILL AS THE SENSE OF TOUGH TAKES THE PLACE OF SIGHT.



THE ARTS AND CRAFTS OF THE OLD WORLD ARE REVIVED BY MEN WHO HAVE LOST THEIR SIGHT, AND WISH TO SERVE THE WORLD BY CREATING USEFUL AND BEAUTIFUL RUGS AND HAND-WOVEN FABRICS OF VARIOUS KINDS.

Thompson-Houston Company in their factory at Neuilly-sur-Marne. These men demonstrated that they could do the work successfully from a commercial standpoint and their number is being rapidly augmented. There is a blind winding school near the home of M. Rene Valley-Rodet, head of the Pasteur Institute near Versailles.

There is also a blind winding room in America founded by Dr. Wheeler. A special room was set aside known as the Double Duty Finger Guild where several score of sightless men and women are earning their living, happy in the thought that their efforts are of recognized value to the world. Men trained in this Guild Workshop are often sought by other electrical factories and encouraging reports of their success from employers stimulate other sightless men and other employers of labor, thus the field of opportunity for these handicapped men is steadily enlarging.

It was feared by some that the blind could not earn the standard wage, and therefore trouble would be created in the labor world which will not tolerate "breaking down the wage scale," but the men with full sight have met their blinded comrades in a most friendly way, helping them with a most kindly spirit.

Charles M. Schwab says that the subject of reconstruction of disabled soldiers and sailors will touch every branch of American industry; "The man who has offered his body in the defense of his country must not be allowed to return to us merely as a hero, worthy of our sympathy. His physical handicap, whatever it may be, will not, except in rare instances, render him useless as an industrial factor; on the contrary, it will afford a greater opportunity than ever before.

"Never before has opportunity for advancement in industry been so great as it is today. The gates are opened wide for trained men; and the Government program of rehabilitation is a guarantee of what we may expect. Our disabled soldiers will be taught to use their brains and brains are needed to carry out the plans of those who furnish capital.

"In my years of experience as an employer of large groups of men, I have rarely known a man who really used his brains to his full capacity and failed to advance. I believe that the emphasis of this fact will have much to do with the recovery and success of our disabled soldiers and sailors. If these men can be imbued with the spirit that impelled the most striking successes in American industry there should be little difficulty in solving the problem of reconstruction.

"It is the duty of the business men of America to take these men at their intrinsic value, to employ them not from a sense of duty but because a trained man who has been taught to think is a valuable asset."

FIVE THOUSAND THEATRES TO PRESE
ONE PLAY SIMULTANEOUSLY: "THE RO
CALL," PERCY MacKAYE'S RED CR
MASQUE WILL HAVE THIS UNIQUE HON

"THE ROLL CALL," the new Red Cross Masque by P MacKaye, having been presented at Washington b President Wilson, head of the Red Cross and before dire from all parts of the country, will speedily be staged in at leas thousand communities. This simple and beautiful spectacle, wi great appeal to the mercy and kindness of people is something than a mere entertainment. When "Caliban" proved so fine a su the discovery was made that innate in the American peopl a talent for song and dance and dramatic fervor little dreame hence the American Red Cross decided to invite Mr. MacKa write a Red Cross Masque that would spread the spirit of the Cross and incidently encourage enrollment toward the enlarged m bership that they hoped to obtain in the Christmas campaign.

"The Roll Call" is distinctly more, however, than an appea Red Cross membership. Mr. MacKaye, in the preface, says "it aims by its construction to be of service anywhere to comm ties, large or small, on a scale modest or elaborate, according to conditions. In order to render its production the more practica simple, the text is followed by an appendix containing explici signs in color, together with comments regarding details of ac lighting, setting, music, costumes, etc., as seem pertinent and sug tive. A growing, vital ideal of education in our new age urge principle that all who seek to understand and grasp the essentia their environment—whether in trade, labor, art, government or great social movements of our time—shall personally share and some definite part in doing that which they aim to understand.

"That principle—participation—is the prime motive of com nity drama. To take positive, voluntary part in creating and i preting a dramatic production imbued with a larger human th quickens the interest and imagination of the participator with f understandings of this theme in ways more deep and enduring any mere negative witnessing of a play, reading a story, listenin a lecture, or studying a treatise, created and developed wholly a from his own initiative. To the unnumbered workers for the Cross, their own share of service in that great social organism kind of educating experience based essentially on this vital princ —participation. It has seemed essential, therefore, to the w that the kind of expression in art peculiarly adapted, by kinshi the use and inspiration of such workers is the form of commu drama—a manifold form, capable of infinite variety."

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